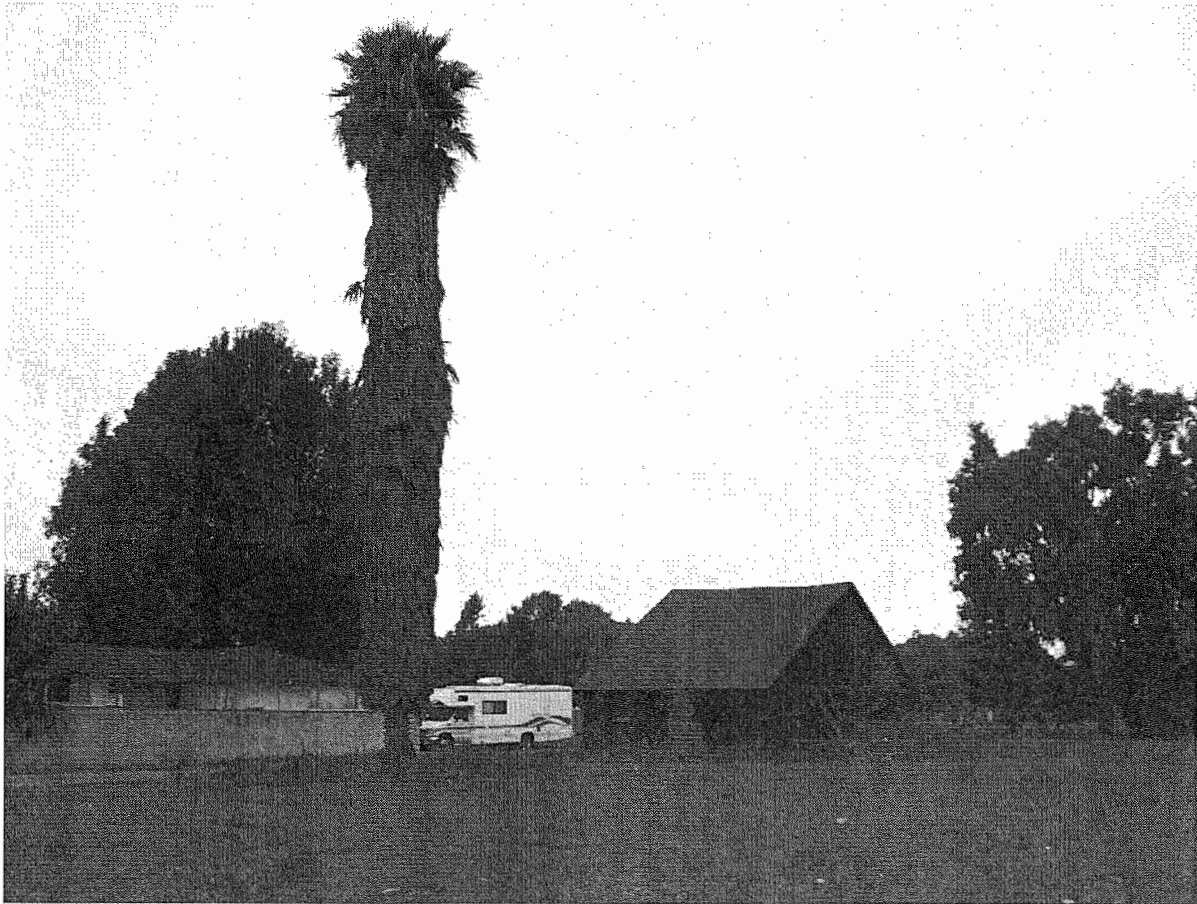


# INFORMATIONAL 3

A STUDY OF THE DPR 523 (A & B) PREPARED BY  
MICHAEL CORBETT FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT  
34044 FREMONT STREET AND 33858 BEARD ROAD,  
FREMONT , ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



Prepared for Dutra-Cerro-Graden  
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Date: November 10, 2011

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### Introduction and purpose:

In early October 2011, Urban Programmers was asked by Dutra-Cerro-Graden, Inc to review a DPR-prepared by Michael Corbett, Architectural Historian that described the history, historic association and the architecture of the Beard-Fremont property located at 34044 Fremont Street and 3858 Beard Road in the City of Fremont. Urban Programmers found the provided historical research to be extensive and did not conduct additional historical research. However we did find two areas where additional information would be helpful to the understanding of the existing property. The first area is assertions, where historical research did not provide conclusive information, and the second is in the description of the existing barn where photographs indicate the condition but it is not described.

### Summary of Historical facts:

The following information is taken from the Corbett form which provides a detailed and thorough rendition of the history for the subject parcel. The study identified the property from the Spanish Era, when it was included in the 1797 lands of Mission San Jose, through the Mexican Period and secularization of the Missions in 1833. In 1842 the subject property was included in Rancho Potrero de los Cerritos, granted to Thomas Pacheco and Augustin Alviso, who grazed cattle on the land, reserving a portion for farming. In the American era, the early American land owners in the area were Elias Beard, John Beard his son and George W. Patterson of Ardenwood. The study further identifies John Beard as the owner of a 203 acre property that included the subject parcel. The study indicates there are no structures or buildings that remain from this period. Following subdivision of the land into farm plots of approximately 5 acres by the Spring Valley Water Company, lot 19 (5 acres) and one acre from Lot 20 were purchased by Joao Francisco Diaz in November 1914. Of note in this time frame is the Alameda County Assessor's value of \$400 dollars of improvements shown on the 1917 role. Corbett makes the assumption that the value is attributable to the existing barn and a 2 story house that no longer exists - a reasonable conclusion unless there were factors that are unknown today.

Five years later the property was sold to A. J. Santos who moved from a farm in Eden Township. However, during the next 5 years Santos made improvements that increased the value of improvements on the property by an additional \$300 and \$100 of personal property. This substantial increase could be the construction or increased size of the existing barn and the personal property could be equipment, other than livestock, housed in the barn.<sup>1</sup> From 1919-1930, it appears that Santos, a widower, lived on the property with four of his adult children. Three sons were vegetable farmers (no location given), and one was a laborer. The subject parcel was transferred to the Santos children in 1931. The eldest son Antone Santos Jr. and his wife are reported to have resided in the two-story Beard house until their deaths, his earlier and hers in c.1951, after which the property was sold.

The next owner, c.1951-52, of the property was Virginia Avila; she like the two previous owners was from Portugal or the Azore Islands. It is described that her motive for acquiring the property was to be close to her daughter Mary and family. Mary Mello lived down the road where her husband, Melvin A. Mello, grew up on a Beard Road farm and continued to farm, extending his farming to the Avila property. Melvin and Mary Mello did not live on the Beard-Fremont property at this time but appear to have had a working relationship with Mrs. Avila to farm the land around her house (Beard two-story

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<sup>1</sup> Dunning, Lorry, The Ultimate American Tractor Data Book, Nebraska Test Tractors-1920-1960, MBI Publishing Co, Ocala WI, 1999. In 1920 there were 191 firms manufacturing 203,207 tractors that year. The 1920 Census showed almost a quarter of a million gas tractors in use. One of the first Standish Steam Rotary Plows the "Mayflower" was developed in California in 1868.

house). In addition to his father, Melvin's uncles and aunt also had truck farms in the area and the family is memorialized in the street name Mello Way. In 1955, a roadside fresh fruit and vegetable stand was constructed at the edge of Beard Road. In the late 1950's the two-story Beard house was demolished and a new house constructed at 3858 Beard Road. Melvin and Mary leased out the fruit/vegetable stand and lived in the new house until the property was divided and sold in 1980. It is not stated if Melvin Mello continued to farm or retired from farming after moving to the new house.

The current owner, Noble Ouye, lives in Southern California, and leases the fruit/vegetable stand to Gary Nagata. The stand has grown in size and sells a wide variety of produce from all over the world.

The DPR Forms explain how the Mello extended family was intraracial to the farming history along Beard Road. However, it is not stated in the DPR Forms if the barn on the subject property was used by Mello prior to the 1950's or if it was a storage and garage for Mrs. Avila. Melvin Mello is reported to farm on his and other properties and would likely have kept farming equipment and other essential items at the farm where he lived. Due to the deterioration resulting from the lack of maintenance, it appears the barn was not used in a productive manner for well over 50 years.

#### **Description of the Fremont-Beard Barn:**

The Prairie style barn is described as a three isle (bay) form of a light frame general purpose barn. This is an accurate general description, however it does not provide an individual description of this barn. The photographs included in the DPR 523B give the sense of the severely deteriorated condition, that effects the integrity of the building. The assertion that the barn was constructed by a professional barn builder is unsubstantiated and given the lack of structural integrity, this is questionable. Barn builders were carpenters who specialized in constructing barns, sheds and other ancillary buildings. Generally speaking they had knowledge of structural forces and, even without a plan book, followed established criteria for the structure. Even barns that were economically built, often using recycled materials and exclusive of rotted wood, would not separate at the ridge as this one has done. According to Mr. Corbett's research, into the property tax roles, the barn was constructed between 1914 and 1924. Mr. Corbett believes the earlier date of construction.

Urban Programmers visited the site on two occasions in October of 2011, to gain an understanding of the buildings and to document their condition. The barn is used as general storage and it was not safe for anyone to climb around inside the building; hence sections of the interior of the building could not be seen. We also experienced problems opening the doors to the center section of the barn, which also limited what could be seen. Alterations were observed, but it is not possible to determine definitive dates, however hardware and materials lead to the conclusion that many were undertaken during the past 50 years.

The barn is approximately 25 feet by 45 feet, 8 feet high at the eave, and 20 feet at the ridge. It is constructed with a concrete perimeter foundation that appears to have been a weak mix because it is crumbling. It also appears to have been installed at different times- possibly indicating that the barn was enlarged although this is difficult to determine without better access to the interior construction and framing. The barn does not have a raised floor; rather it has a packed earth (dirt) floor within the perimeter foundation. The single-sided walls are typical in barn construction. The exterior walls are a mix of materials, some of which are original vertical board and batt on the lower 8+- feet of the building, and plain vertical boards within the gable of the roof. There are areas of more contemporary installations where plywood and recycled boards have been added. What appears to be a horizontal tie band above the original door height (8 +- ft.) does not appear to have extended all the way across the facade. The roof structure, as mentioned above, is failing. Rafters were nailed together in the peak of

the gable without a ridge beam or tree. The original construction appears to have had rafter ends from the two sides butted and nailed without additional structure. As the rest of the building is falling away from the center, these connections have failed creating gaps in the peak, and a very observable sagging roof. The roof structure is wood rafters, purlins and wood shingles. From what we could observe, the roof is a single layer of shingles that did not have any underlayment. The shingles are deteriorated and appear to have been shedding for years leaving holes in the roof.

The west façade (appears to be the front or main façade) has a section of the horizontal structural element that has been removed to create a taller door on the west façade. Removing this girder has further weakened the structural system. This modified opening is closed by double doors that are hinged and created of recycled boards. It appears the deterioration, or possibly a recycled door that does not fit, has resulted in a large gap above one door. These crudely constructed doors do not appear original to the building and require additional boards at angle to hold them together. The center bay doors are rough sawn plywood with hinges and are also not original materials. At the far end of the barn a third opening was created and no longer has a door. Horizontal boards have been added across the opening act to limit access and to hold the wall together. The peak has two openings; at the top is a hole where boards are missing. We did not observe evidence of a hay hook or system that would have supported a pulley, though this may have been removed. Below that opening is a larger side-hinged door made of the same boards as the siding. This is the hay or loft door. Between these openings, spanning the wall, is what appears to be a horizontal tie board. The general condition of the siding is poor with many of the boards pulling away from the building and many that are rotten.

The earth along the east façade extends over the foundation and lower part of the wood wall. The façade is covered in the same wide board siding, much of what appears original. There is slight evidence, in the coloration along the edges and the remains of a strip or two, that bats were used on this façade, however the evidence is not conclusive and only a trace piece remains. On this façade vertical boards in the side of the gable are present that extend from the foundation to the rafters. The center has a horizontal board that appears to act as a tie, but it is not a continuous member and is not spliced. It appears to be nailed to the studs through the vertical boards. Within the peak the vertical boards overhang the lower wall and it is presumed that a horizontal collar tie exists. There are missing sections of the boards and plywood as well as horizontal board additions to the wall. This wall is also pulling away and is buttressed by boards anchored in the earth to hold the wall up.

The two end facades are constructed with vertical boards that, for the most part, extend from the sill to the plate. Where boards are missing, the holes have been covered with horizontal boards and/or plywood.

The interior of the barn shows the three bay design of a general purpose barn. However the center bay is defined by a more recent loft structure that is substantially more sturdy than the barn itself. Using recycled wood of greater dimensions, this element is contributing to holding the building together.

The general over all condition of the barn is fragile with a severely deteriorated (rot) structural system and façade wood that is also deteriorated or missing.

The context of the area surrounding the barn is, as Mr. Corbett describes, diminished by the surrounding houses. It is our opinion that the integrity of design and materials is also diminished by the alterations and missing sections of materials.

Preservation Brief # 20 - Preservation of historic barns describes the setting as of primary importance:

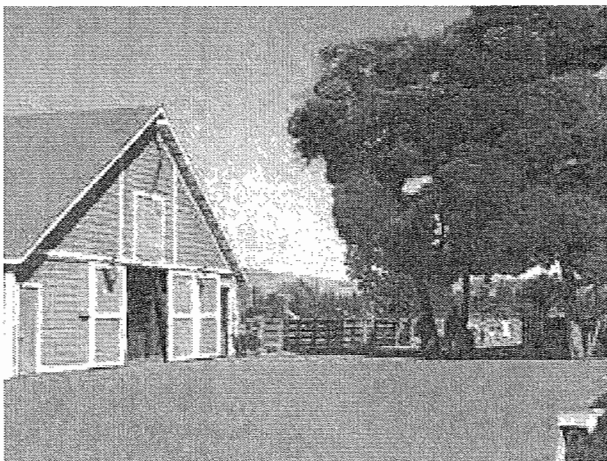
***“Setting.** Setting is one of the primary factors contributing to the historic character of a barn. Farmers built barns in order to help them work the land; barns belong on farms, where they can be seen in relation to the surrounding fields and other structures in the farm complex. A barn crowded by suburbs is not a barn in the same sense as is a barn clustered with other farm buildings, or standing alone against a backdrop of cornfields. Hence, the preservation of barns should not be divorced from the preservation of the setting: farms and farmland, ranches and range, orchards, ponds, fields, streams and country roads.*

*Other important elements of setting include fences, stone walls, roads, paths, barnyards, corrals, and ancillary structures such as windmills and silos. (Silos, indeed, have become so closely associated with barns as nearly to have lost their "separate" identities.) These features help place the building in the larger agricultural context, relating it to its purpose in the overall rural setting.”<sup>2</sup>*

Although the barn retains its general form and shape the integrity is diminished by the lack of an agricultural setting. The integrity is further diminished by the condition of the building and that the repair/rehabilitation of this building to a level of safety would in essence create a new building.

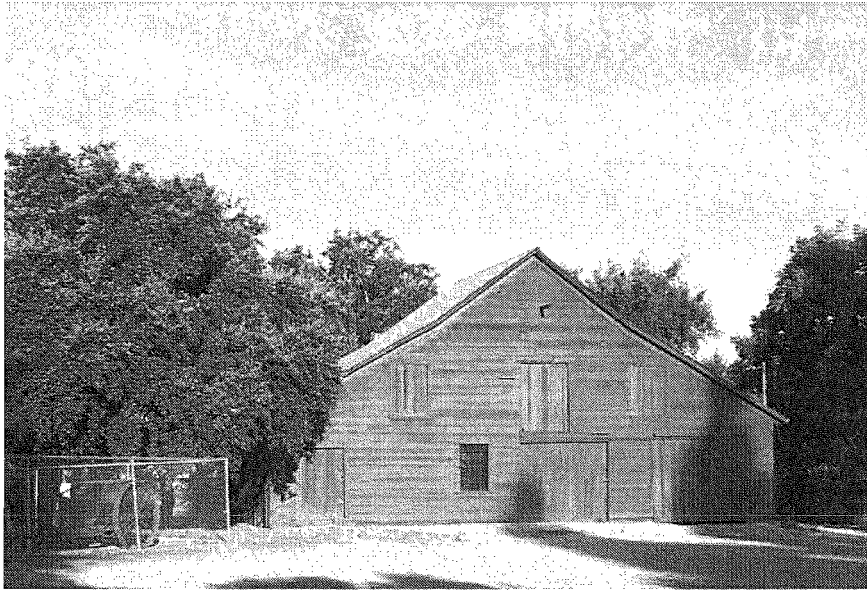
#### **Barns in Fremont:**

Mr. Corbett discusses the fact that rural agricultural barns are not as plentiful as in the past when the southern Alameda County's economy was based in agriculture. As the City of Fremont developed new industry and increased population the rural lands were developed with the attendant loss of agricultural buildings, farm houses, barns, sheds, stables and tank houses. The City of Fremont is to be applauded for taking steps to preserve the agricultural heritage of the area in two historic farms. Ardenwood with over 200 acres is a working farm and Shinn Historical Park and Arboretum, retains the context and relationship of the farm house and agricultural buildings. Barns in the Shinn Historical Park are very similar in design to the barn on the Beard- Fremont parcel. Other than in the historic parks, barns were identified in agricultural use, or are preserved within the Niles historic district and older communities in Fremont. Mr. Corbett cites 17 barns that had been identified through surveys and only 8-9 remain. Urban Programmers did not conduct a comprehensive survey and we agree with Mr. Corbet that barns are diminishing and are often difficult to see behind other buildings. However in a relatively short period with research to assist in their locations several were identified, some still used for general agricultural storage.

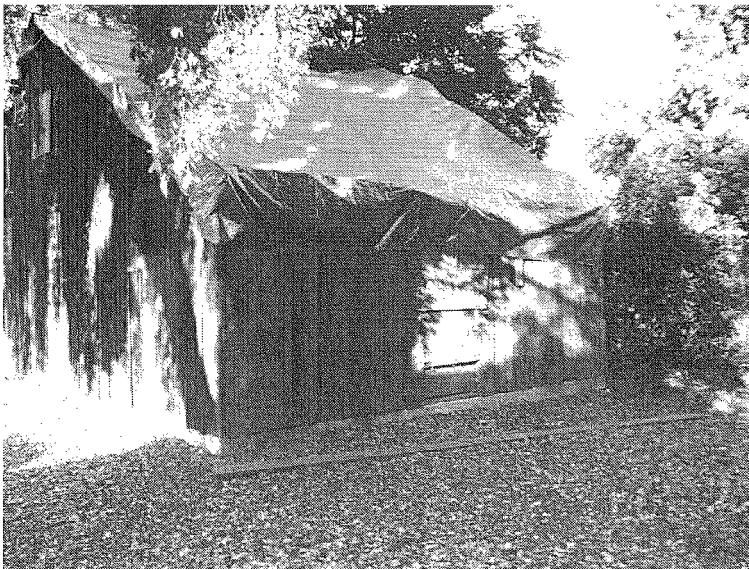


Barn at Ardenwood Historic Farm. A Dutch-Prairie style barn similar to the Fremont-Beard barn. The Long term use of the barn and maintenance have preserved the building in relatively original condition.

<sup>2</sup> Auer, Michael J., Preservation of Historic Barns, Technical Preservation Services, U.S. Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1989.

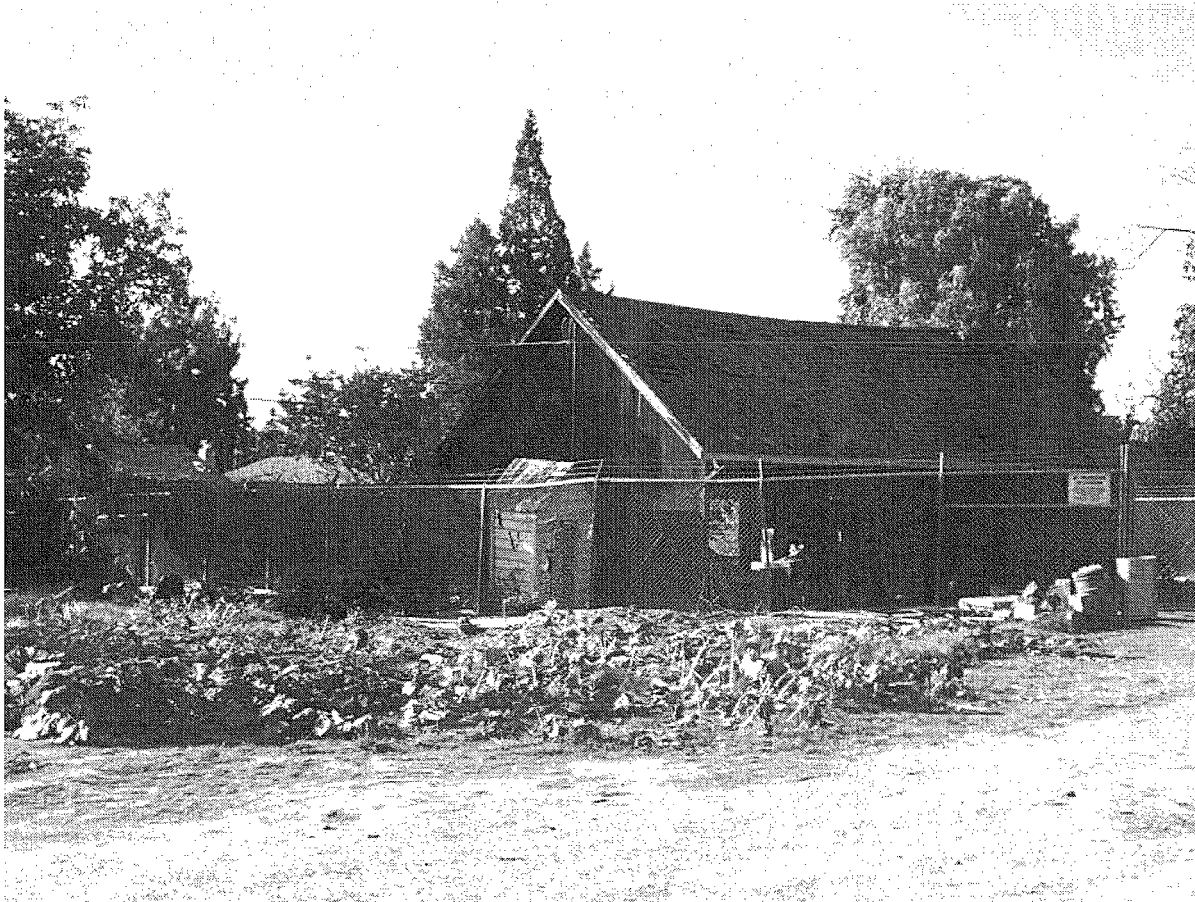


Shin Historic Park and Arboretum , 1251 Peralta Blvd. Original Shinn Barn. This barn is larger than the Fremont-Beard barn, yet it is the same style. Not as well rehabilitated this barn shows arrested deterioration and is stabilized.



Shinn Historical Park and Arboretum. Small barn moved to the site. Funding to maintain this barn has not been available. The barn appears to be deteriorating.

Examples of barns found during a brief windshield survey in Fremont, November 2, 2011.



#1 This barn was found on Peralta Road west of the Shinn Historic Park and Arboretum (next to the Fremont Chapel of Roses). The barn is smaller than the subject barn and is an end facing gable often associated with storing equipment or sorting produce as well as general storage.





#2 Behind the house at 3565 Alvarado-Niles Road is a barn of similar style to the Fremont Beard Barn. This barn appears in context with a large working farm parcel although this may be a separate parcel as the barn is deteriorating.



# 3 Area of agricultural land around 3565 Alvarado-Niles Road.  
Source: Google Earth Pro



#4 A barn at 990 Kraftile Road. There are other barns and storage buildings on this property. These barns may be left from agricultural use or industrial use associated with Kraftile.



#5 This stepped roof barn clearly shows the three bays of a general storage agricultural barn. It is located at 37551 3<sup>rd</sup> street in the Niles District.



#6 This barn is very similar to the one on the Beard-Fremont Property. It is located at 12793 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in the Niles District. In the last two photographs it is shown how close the house is to the barn. This was likely the case at the Beard-Fremont parcel where palm trees – generally associated with a house-remain.





#7 A rural barn that appears to be in use, located off Mission Blvd. There are a couple more working barns off Mission Blvd in the area west of Interstate 680. They are difficult to photograph from the public street.

The City of Fremont joins the many cities in the fertile area that was the fruit and vegetable center for not only the Bay Area, but for some crops such as prunes, the majority shipper for the world. Retaining the heritage in context is a large undertaking and Fremont and East Bay Regional Parks are to be commended for their actions to preserve this segment of history in the historic working farm at Ardenwood and in Shinn Historic Park and Arboretum.

As stated in the beginning, this document was prepared to add to the body of information regarding the Beard-Fremont property. The intention was not to disagree with the research conducted by Mr. Corbett

but to add information that could be considered by the City of Fremont and the Historic Architectural Review Board as they determine the significance of the Fremont-Beard Barn.

Recommendations for the future:

1. A survey of the agricultural buildings, particularly barns and water towers in Fremont should be undertaken.
2. Determine what policies or procedures should be enacted to maintain the significant resources.
3. Consider economic incentives such as Mills Act Contracts to encourage preservation of those deemed important.

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**URBAN PROGRAMMERS** is an interdisciplinary firm specializing in consulting services for historic preservation. The firm has provided services to all levels of government and to private owners and corporations. The firm has extensive experience in property surveys and determinations of significance as well as programs of the National Historic Preservation Act, including Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, "Section 106", and the Certified Historic Structure and Investment Tax Credit Program. The firm has extensive experience providing historical evaluations that comply with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act.

Associates of the firm work under the direction of Bonnie Bamburg who has worked with historic preservation programs since 1972. Her experience includes all aspects of historic preservation programs and an understanding of planning processes and real estate development. This background fosters consulting services based on an understanding of the requirements of various governmental agencies.

For three years, **Bonnie Bamburg** taught the upper division course in Historic Preservation at San Jose State University. For six years she served as a Commissioner with the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission. During her service on the Commission she drafted the first historic preservation element for the General Plan, and the historic preservation ordinance that was adopted by the City Council. She also promoted adoption of the State Historic Building Code. Ms. Bamburg holds certificates in special materials preservation from several universities. She has served on the Governing Board of History San Jose, The Advisory Board of Preservation Action Council –San Jose, and as a Board member of the Western Region of the Association for Preservation Technology.

**Bonnie Bamburg**, has prepared; historic surveys for cities, counties and the federal government, National Register Nominations for individual sites and 5 historic districts as well as local assessment reports. **Linda Larson Boston**, BA Santa Clara University (history and English), has 25 years experience as a researcher and is a published author in local history; she conducts historic research for architects, attorneys and landowners. She is a former Historical Landmarks Commissioner (1993-1997), a member Institute for Historical Study, and has served on the Board of Directors of the Preservation Action Council of San Jose. **William Zavlaris**, was educated at UCB and received a Masters degree in Urban Design and Planning from SJSU. Mr. Zavlaris, has over 30 years experience in historical architectural assessment, and evaluating architecture for many historical surveys and National Register Nominations. **Douglas A. Bright** received his Master of Architectural History in 2008 from the Savannah College of Art and Design. **Aparna Ankola**, AIA Master of Urban and Regional Planning, San Jose State University (Graduating in May 2006) Master of Architecture with Specialization in *Architectural Conservation*, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, India, 1997 Bachelor of Architecture, Karnataka University, India, 1993

In addition to many individual private clients, Urban Programmers has also provided consulting services to corporations and government agencies, including, The City of San Jose and its Redevelopment Agency, The Towns of Woodside and Portola Valley, City of Avenal, City of Gilroy, City of Monterey, County of Santa Cruz, City of Livermore, City of Santa Clara, City of South San Francisco, City of Morgan Hill, and cities in Colorado, Texas and South Carolina. Other institutions and agencies include Stanford University, The U.S. Department of the Navy, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – San Francisco Medical Center.

Associates who contributed to the Fremont-Beard Property Report

Bonnie Bamburg- Project Manager  
Douglas Bright- Architectural Historian  
William Zavlaris – Architectural survey and setting

PROJECTS REPRESENTATIVE OF PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS FOR CEQA or NHPA COMPLIANCE  
Client contact information will be furnished upon request

Selected rural property analysis:

4203 San Felipe Rd., San Jose  
CEQA Assessment of an agricultural complex c. 1935

Flood Control and Road Extensions Morgan Hill/Santa Clara County  
CEQA Assessment of multiple rural parcels (farm houses, barns and out buildings) between  
Highway 101 and Monterey Road, Butterfield- Tenant Road area  
Morgan Hill CA

Pierce Dairy Ranch- Almaden Rd Santa Clara County  
CEQA Assessment of a dairy ranch c. 1920-55  
Santa Clara County, CA

Nola Fruit Ranch 3120-3160 Berryessa Rd, San Jose  
CEQA Assessment of a multiple parcel extended family fruit ranch and roadside stand  
San Jose, CA

Messina Fruit Ranch, 721 Capitol Ave.  
San Jose Historic Landmark Nomination  
C. 1935 Farm house, barn and out buildings  
San Jose, CA

Sorci Fruit Ranch, Aborn Road, San Jose  
CEQA Assessment of the last section of a family fruit ranch  
Mitigation included creating a video and oral histories by History San Jose

Mirassou Winery, 3000 Aborn Road, San Jose  
CEQA Assessment  
Mitigation and HRS for retained historic buildings  
c.1937 Winery, Ranch house and ancillary warehouses



Selected Residential or Residential/Commercial Assessments provided by Urban Programmers

275 Josselyn Lane, Woodside CA  
CEQA Assessment of property listed in the HRI

222 Albion Way, Woodside CA  
CEQA Assessment of property listed in the HRI  
c.1909 log cabin to be preserved on the property

18234 Daves Avenue, Monte Sereno CA  
CEQA Assessment ; residential property

Lucky Drive, Monte Sereno, CA  
CEQA Assessment; c.1920 residential property

158 E. St John St. San Jose CA  
CEQA Assessment; residential property listed on HRI

Selected Commercial Assessments provided by Urban Programmers

Joe Kerley Chevrolet  
3655 Stevens Creek Blvd. San Jose CA  
CEQA Assessment c.1960 Auto Dealership

San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center, San Francisco  
Define and nominate a NR Historic District on the campus  
Client: SFVAMC

Oak Hill Memorial Park, San Jose  
Assess proposed new mausoleum within City Landmark  
Determination: no-impact  
Client: Oak Hill Memorial Park

First Church of Christ Scientist, St James St., San Jose  
property listed in the National Register  
prepare Historic Structure Report  
Client: Barry Swenson Builder, Swenson Architecture